

Gifted Education
LEXINGTON CITY SCHOOLS

Waddell Elementary School

Newsletter – October 2019

Firstly, thank you for your tremendous support in your child's education as we finish our first quarter of the school year. With this quarterly newsletter of the Lexington City Schools' Gifted Program, along with enrichment activities, we plan to update you on what is going on and what is scheduled for later this year. Before, I would like to provide our district's definition of a gifted student from our Local Plan for Gifted Education available online:

According to the Lexington City Schools Gifted Education Policy, a gifted student demonstrates (but not limited to) "superior performance on nationally normed ability or achievement tests, highly advanced academic performance in school, advanced critical and/or creative thinking skills, inquisitiveness, advanced vocabulary and/or sense of humor, and high motivation for new learning". When a student has been referred by a teacher, parent, administrator, and/or student themselves we use this definition along with parent surveys and student surveys. You can find the complete policy on the district website under Gifted Education.

Mr. Clark has been working with the classroom teachers offering lesson extension and enrichment activities as part of each teachers' differentiation strategies. In Kindergarten, students selected by the teachers, have begun working once a week with Mr. Clark on math enrichment focusing on number sense and sequences including addition. Activities have proven a good challenge for students needing extension. Each week, Mr. Clark works with first and second graders, chosen by teachers, that can benefit from enrichment in addition and subtraction. For example, this year we have worked on "TOPS" in second grade where students work through a series of problems ranging in difficulty and topic. In addition, once a week third graders meet with Mr. Clark to work on math or language arts enrichment, depending on teacher needs. Third graders have worked with (TOPS) *Techniques of Problem-Solving*, an increasingly challenging set of multi-step math problems. Also, 3rd graders have worked on an enrichment project involving rounding large numbers and creating an original card game designed to teach the concept to other students.

In Kindergarten, Jacky Foster works with teachers and selected students for reading extension and enrichment using the *Junior Great Books*. These books provide students a chance to read and discuss above grade level material and express individual opinions. These groups are kept small in order to best provide a setting for thoughtful, group discussion.

All identified gifted students in math in fourth and fifth grades meet regularly with Mr. Clark each week. Groups are kept small in numbers to have activities that are more meaningful. For example, so far this year students have worked in the TOPS series and strive to meet personal goals by correcting their own work with the objective of moving through the series, or deck, they are in. In addition, students are working on enrichment projects that require technology and research integrated with the classroom content. As an example, the 5th graders are currently working with decimals and designing parties using information they find from online businesses.

In addition to math, students identified for language arts in the fourth grade have been working with Mr. Clark and classroom teachers on writing original realistic fiction picture books. Students spent a few

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sessions researching different holidays, traditions, and customs from around the world, and with that information they are creating original stories told through pictures with minimal narratives using PowerPoint.

In November, the gifted evaluation process begins when all third graders take the full battery of the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test). Those test scores, along with parent and teacher surveys are taken into consideration when the Gifted eligibility committee convenes in January. The committee is comprised of Gifted Education Coordinator, classroom teacher, principal, guidance counselor, and any other necessary faculty/staff member. Decision letters concerning identification in math or language arts will be then mailed home. In addition, all second graders take a CogAT Screening Test in March to help support the identification process in third grade.

We always are on the lookout for new opportunities for after school enrichment programs that the students can cultivate and learn new skills and talents. If you have a certain skill or talent that can be offered after school, please contact Jordan Clark, Gifted Education Coordinator. We also highly value parent volunteers that work inside the classroom. If you have a time you can give, please contact Jordan Clark.

Thank you again for your time and support in the education of your child. We look forward to another productive year together.